

INTRODUCING PLAIN HUNT

Once you can strike call-changes accurately, you are ready to try your hand at 'Method' change ringing.

The first 'method' to learn is *Plain Hunt*. In this, you change the position of your bell in the ringing order every handstroke and every backstroke.

Suppose you are ringing the Treble in rounds. You are leading, so you are the first bell to ring at each handstroke, and at each backstroke. Each time all the bells ring once this is called a *Row* (to rhyme with *toe* — hopefully it won't rhyme with *now!*)

We use the notation 123456 to indicate six bells ringing a row in the order of rounds, with the treble (no 1 bell) *leading* and the tenor (no 6 bell) *lying* or *covering*.

The treble could move one place in the order, to produce the row 213456. Note that for the treble to move away from the lead, the no 2 bell has to move down to lead.

We could continue to move the treble one place at a time, like so:

123456
213456
231456
234156
234516
234561

The line shows the path that the treble makes through the other bells. Now the treble is the last bell to ring. We could move it forwards in the order again, one place at a time until it is leading once more:

234561
234516
234156
231456
213456
123456

You will see that this contains the same rows as we had when the treble was going out to the back (going out to the back means getting later in the bell order). However, one objective of change ringing is that the bells should never ring in the same order twice, either in successive rows, or even in rows which are separate. So this very simple sort of change ringing doesn't meet the rule.

We can avoid this problem by letting each bell change its position in each row. This is also more interesting for the ringers, because everyone has something to do.

Plain Hunt

On Five

1	2 3 4 5 6	Backstroke
2	1 4 3 5 6	Handstroke
2	4 1 5 3 6	Backstroke
4	2 5 1 3 6	Handstroke
4	5 2 3 1 6	Backstroke
5	4 3 2 1 6	Handstroke
5	3 4 1 2 6	Backstroke
3	5 1 4 2 6	Handstroke
3	1 5 2 4 6	Backstroke
1	3 2 5 4 6	Handstroke
1	2 3 4 5 6	Backstroke

Now look at the diagram above. See how the treble moves one place at a time towards the 'back' until it becomes the last bell to ring, and then forward one place at a time towards the 'front' until returns to lead.

At first, this looks exactly the same as in the first example. But now look at what the other bells are doing. They are also moving one place at a time in the order.

Look at the path of the no 5 bell. You will see that it is exactly the same path as the treble, but starting from the back and going down to lead, and then up to the back again.

To convince yourself, draw in the line of the treble on this diagram.

Plain Hunt

On Five

1 2 3 4 5 6	Backstroke
2 1 4 3 5 6	Handstroke
2 4 1 5 3 6	Backstroke
4 2 5 1 3 6	Handstroke
4 5 2 3 1 6	Backstroke
5 4 3 2 1 6	Handstroke
5 3 4 1 2 6	Backstroke
3 5 1 4 2 6	Handstroke
3 1 5 2 4 6	Backstroke
1 3 2 5 4 6	Handstroke
1 2 3 4 5 6	Backstroke

Now draw in the line of the no 4 bell. This goes down to lead, then to the back, and then down to its starting position again. Using different colours, draw in the rest of the bells. You will see that they all do the same sort of thing. They all move one place at a time, and turn round each time they get to the end of the row. This means that all the ringers can join in the change ringing at the same time.

Moving one place at a time like this is called *Hunting* and when all the bells are doing this, it is called the *Plain Hunting Course* or *Plain Hunt* for short.

The order of the bells

In plain hunt, you have to follow a different bell at each stroke. The bells always come in the order 1, 2, 4, 5, 3, 1, 2, 4, 5, 3, 1, ... *'up the evens and down the odds.'* Find the number of your bell in the list, and start with the next (omitting your own number). Thus, bell 5 follows 3, 1, 2, 4, 3, 1, 2, 4, ...

Leading

When you are leading, because you are the first bell, you have no bell to *follow* (i.e. to

ring after at the *same* stroke). Instead, (on an odd number of bells) you lead off the tenor (i.e. follow it at the opposite stroke).

The three speeds

You have to alter the speed at which you ring in order to hunt up and down.

When hunting up to the back, you must slow down. This is to let other bells to ring in front of you. When hunting down to the front, you must speed up to overtake the bells in front of you.

If you speed up, you will automatically move towards the lead, and if you slow down, you will automatically move towards the back. When you are turning round at lead and at the back, you ring at the speed of rounds, halfway between the up and down speeds.

Ringling at the right speed is the secret of change ringing, and is something you must strive for at all times.

Counting your place

You must know the *place* in which you are ringing: that is, your position in the order of the bells. It is important to know when you are hunting up to the back, and when you are hunting down to the lead. This means that you must count your place as you ring.

When you are leading, count 1. When you move into second's place, count 2. In third's place, count 3, and so on until you get to fifth's place. You ring twice in fifth's, then once in fourth's, third's, second's, and on to the lead. You have to do this as well as remembering which bell to follow. Actually, experienced ringers don't have to remember which bells to follow, because they can work it out as they go.

Rules for hunting up and down

In this introductory lesson, we have explained the principle of plain hunt, and have told you the order in which you follow the bells. This is just to get you started, and later you will need to study the rules for finding out which bells to follow in any situation.